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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/523,102	02/01/2005	Chojiro Kuriyama	10921.0276USWO	8534

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EXAMINER

THOMAS, ERIC W

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2831

DATE MAILED: 05/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/523,102

Applicant(s)

KURIYAMA, CHOJIRO

Examiner

Eric Thomas

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17, 20 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 17, 20 and 21 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 7, 13 and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-6, 8, 9-12, 15-16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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INTRODUCTION

The examiner acknowledges, as recommended in the MPEP, the applicant's submission of the amendment dated ^{3/20/06}~~1/23/06~~. At this point, claims 1, 9, 14, 17, have been amended; claims 18-19 have been cancelled; and claim 21 has been added. Thus, claims 1-17, 20-21 are pending in the instant application.

Claim Objections

Claim 15 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 15, line 3, change "the" to --a--.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 7, 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Omori et al. (US 2005/0041372).

Omori et al. disclose in table 2 example 28, a niobium capacitor comprising an anode with niobium as its main component; and a dielectric layer formed on the anode (see paragraphs 149-157), wherein the anode contains

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manganese in an amount sufficient for stabilizing the dielectric layer (see table 2).

Regarding claim 7, Omori et al. disclose the anode is a porous sintered body of a compressed niobium-containing powder (see paragraph 124 & table 2 example 28).

Regarding claim 13, Omori et al. disclose the capacitor further comprises a solid electrolyte layer formed on said dielectric layer, the solid electrolyte layer consisting of MnO₂ (see paragraph 149).

Regarding claim 14, Omori et al. disclose a method for manufacturing a niobium capacitor, comprising the steps of: forming an anode containing niobium and forming a dielectric layer on said anode; wherein the step of forming said anode is performed to cause said anode to additionally contain manganese (see example 28) in an amount sufficient for stabilizing said dielectric layer (see capacitor properties in table 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Omori et al. (US 2005/0041372).

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Omori et al. disclose the claimed invention except for the dielectric is formed of a Nb_2O_5 .

Nb_2O_5 is a well-known dielectric material used in niobium solid electrolytic capacitors.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to forming the dielectric of Omori et al. with Nb_2O_5 , since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 17, 20-21 are allowed.
6. Claims 3-6, 8, 9-12, 15-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art does not teach or suggest (taken in combination with the other claimed features) a niobium capacitor comprising a surface layer with niobium oxide as its main component (claims 3-4); a surface layer with niobium nitride as its main component (claims 5-6); a surface layer containing manganese (claim 8); a junction region contains NbO and Mn (claims 9-12); a surface layer thereof 0.1 to 10 wt % of manganese (claim 15); doping the sintered body with manganese (claim 16); said anode is oxidized in a vapor phase atmosphere containing manganese (claim 17, 20).

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Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 7,13-14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Thomas whose telephone number is 571-272-1985. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 6:30 AM - 3:45 PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dean Reichard can be reached on 571-272-1984. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ewt


ERIC W. THOMAS
PRIMARY EXAMINER

5/1/06